

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-27 and enter the following claims:

1 28. (newly presented) A method for automatically swapping application  
2 tasks running within a local network site of a computer network when  
3 access from said local network site to a remote network site is delayed, said  
4 method comprising:

5 initiating, from a communications application at a local network site,  
6 a link to a remote network site while multi-tasking applications are  
7 simultaneously running at said local network site;

8 initiating retrieval of data from said remote network site, in response  
9 to initiating said link;

10 automatically switching focus from said communications application  
11 to one of said multi-tasking applications, in response to initiating said link;

12 determining, after focus has been switched from said communications  
13 application, that said data has been retrieved; and

14 automatically providing user notification that said data has been  
15 retrieved, in response to said determination.

1 29. (newly presented) The method of claim 28, wherein said step of  
2 automatically providing user notification comprises automatically switching  
3 focus back to said communications application from said one of said multi-  
4 tasking applications.

1 30. (newly presented) The method of claim 29, wherein:

2 said method further comprises detecting expiration of a predetermined  
3 period of time in which no user input has been received; and

4 said step of switching focus back to said communications application  
5 is performed only after said step of detecting said expiration.

1 31. (newly presented) The method of claim 28, further comprising:  
2 receiving user input selecting said communications application after  
3 said notification has been provided; and  
4 switching focus back to said communications application from said  
5 multi-tasking application in response to receipt of said user input.

1 32. (newly presented) The method of claim 28, wherein:  
2 said method further comprises identifying a previously utilized  
3 application among said multi-tasking applications; and  
4 said step of automatically switching focus to said multi-tasking  
5 application comprises automatically switching focus to said previously  
6 utilized application.

1 33. (newly presented) The method of claim 28, wherein:  
2 said method further comprises consulting a ring of applications to  
3 identify a selected application among said ring and among said multi-tasking  
4 applications; and  
5 said step of automatically switching focus to said multi-tasking  
6 application comprises automatically switching focus to said identified  
7 application.

1 34. (newly presented) The method of claim 28, wherein:  
2 said method further comprises determining whether said link is a time-  
3 consuming link, based on a location of said remote network site; and  
4 said step of automatically switching focus to said multi-tasking  
5 application is performed only if said link is determined to be a time  
6 consuming link.

1 35. (newly presented) A system for automatically swapping application  
2 tasks running within a local network site of a computer network when  
3 access from said local network site to a remote network site is delayed, said  
4 system comprising:

5 a local network site including processing resources, memory  
6 operatively linked to said processing resources, and a communications facility  
7 operatively linked to said processing resources;

8 a communications application, running in said processing resources,  
9 that initiates a link to a remote network site via said communications facility  
10 while multi-tasking applications are simultaneously running at said local  
11 network site;

12 means for initiating retrieval of data from said remote network site, in  
13 response to initiating said link;

14 means for automatically switching focus from said communications  
15 application to one of said multi-tasking applications, in response to initiating  
16 said link;

17 means for determining, after focus has been switched from said  
18 communications application, that said data has been retrieved; and

19 means for automatically providing user notification that said data has  
20 been retrieved, in response to said determination.

1 36. (newly presented) A system according to claim 35, wherein said means  
2 for automatically providing user notification comprises means for  
3 automatically switching focus back to said communications application from  
4 said one of said multi-tasking applications.

1 37. (newly presented) A system according to claim 36, wherein:  
2 said system further comprises means for detecting expiration of a  
3 predetermined period of time in which no user input has been received; and  
4 said means for automatically switching focus back to said  
5 communications application operates only after said expiration is detected.

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1 38. (newly presented) A system according to claim 35, further comprising:  
2 means for receiving user input selecting said communications  
3 application after said notification has been provided; and  
4 means for switching focus back to said communications application  
5 from said multi-tasking application in response to receipt of said user input.

1 39. (newly presented) A system according to claim 35, wherein:  
2 said system further comprises means for identifying a previously  
3 utilized application among said multi-tasking applications; and  
4 said means for automatically switching focus to said multi-tasking  
5 application comprises means for automatically switching focus to said  
6 previously utilized application.

1 40. (newly presented) A system according to claim 35, wherein:  
2 said system further comprises means for consulting a ring of  
3 applications to identify a selected application among said ring and among  
4 said multi-tasking applications; and  
5 said means for automatically switching focus to said multi-tasking  
6 application comprises means for automatically switching focus to said  
7 identified application.

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1 41. (newly presented) A system according to claim 35, wherein:  
2       said system further comprises means for determining whether said link  
3 is a time-consuming link, based on a location of said remote network site;  
4 and  
5       said means for automatically switching focus to said multi-tasking  
6 application operates only if said link is determined to be a time consuming  
7 link.

1 42. (newly presented) A program product for automatically swapping  
2 application tasks running within a local network site of computer network  
3 when access from said local network site to a remote network site is  
4 delayed, said program product comprising:

5 a communications application that initiates a link to a remote network  
6 site while multi-tasking applications are simultaneously running at said local  
7 network site;

8 means for initiating retrieval of data from said remote network site, in  
9 response to initiating said link;

10 means for automatically switching focus from said communications  
11 application to one of said multi-tasking applications, in response to initiating  
12 said link;

13 means for determining, after focus has been switched from said  
14 communications application, that said data has been retrieved; and

15 means for automatically providing user notification that said data has  
16 been retrieved, in response to said determination; and

17 a computer usable medium encoding said communications application,  
18 said means for initiating retrieval of data, said means for automatically  
19 switching focus from said communications application, said means for  
20 determining, and said means for automatically providing user notification.

1 43. (newly presented) A program product according to claim 42, wherein  
2 said means for automatically providing user notification comprises means for  
3 automatically switching focus back to said communications application from  
4 said one of said multi-tasking applications.

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1 44. (newly presented) A program product according to claim 43, wherein:  
2 said computer usable medium further encodes means for detecting  
3 expiration of a predetermined period of time in which no user input has been  
4 received; and

5 said means for automatically switching focus back to said  
6 communications application operates only after said expiration is detected.

1 45. (newly presented) A program product according to claim 42, wherein  
2 said computer usable medium further encodes:

3 means for receiving user input selecting said communications  
4 application after said notification has been provided; and

5 means for switching focus back to said communications application  
6 from said multi-tasking application in response to receipt of said user input.

1 46. (newly presented) A program product according to claim 42, wherein:  
2 said computer usable medium further encodes means for identifying  
3 a previously utilized application among said multi-tasking applications; and

4 said means for automatically switching focus to said multi-tasking  
5 application comprises means for automatically switching focus to said  
6 previously utilized application.

1 47. (newly presented) A program product according to claim 42, wherein:  
2 said computer usable medium further encodes means for consulting  
3 a ring of applications to identify a selected application among said ring and  
4 among said multi-tasking applications; and

5 said means for automatically switching focus to said multi-tasking  
6 application comprises means for automatically switching focus to said  
7 identified application.

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1 48. (newly presented) A program product according to claim 42, wherein:  
2       said computer usable medium further encodes means for determining  
3 whether said link is a time-consuming link, based on a location of said  
4 remote network site; and  
5       said means for automatically switching focus to said multi-tasking  
6 application operates only if said link is determined to be a time consuming  
7 link.

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